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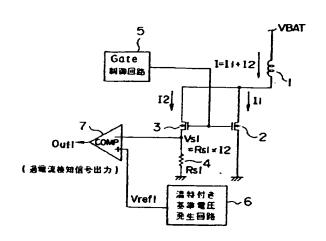
(54) 【発明の名称】 過電流検知回路

(57)【要約】 (修正有)

【課題】

センス電圧Vs2の温特と基準電圧Vref2の温特が等しくなるように定数設定することによって過電流検知レベルの精度を向上させた過電流検知回路を提供する。 【解決手段】 電流が流れる負荷1と、負荷電流の一部を流す抵抗4と、メインMOSFET2およびミラーMOSFET3の両方のゲート端子に接続されたゲート制御回路5と、基準電圧発生回路6と、基準電圧発生回路とミラーMOSFETのソース電位とを入力とする比較器7とからなる過電流検知回路において、ミラーMOSFETのソース電位の温度係数と基準電圧発生回路の温度係数が等しい。また、基準電圧発生回路の構成がバンドギャップリファレンス回路であり、または電電流回路と所定の温特を有する抵抗とから成り、または電源電圧と、異なる温特を有する二つの抵抗とから構成される。

コンパレータの反転・非反転の両入力、即ち



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【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項】】 電流が流れる負荷と、

該負荷を駆動し、該負荷とGND間に接続されたメイン MOSFETŁ.

該メインMOSFETにミラー接続され負荷電流の一部 を流し、かつ。

該メインMOSFETと同等、もしくはそれ以下のトラ ンジスタサイズであるミラーMOSFETと、

該ミラーMOSFETのソース端子とGND間に接続さ れ、該負荷電流の一部を流す抵抗と、

該メインMOSFETおよび該ミラーMOSFETの両 方のゲート端子に接続されたゲート制御回路と、 基準電圧発生回路と、

該基準電圧発生回路と該ミラーMOSFETのソース電 位とを入力とする比較器と、からなる過電流検知回路に おいて、

該ミラーMOSFETのソース電位の温度係数と該基準 電圧発生回路の温度係数が等しいことを特徴とする過電 流検知回路。

【請求項2】 該基準電圧発生回路の構成がバンドギャ 20 っプリファレンス回路であることを特徴とする請求項! に記載の過電流検知回路。

【請求項3】 該基準電圧発生回路の構成が定電流回路 と所定の温特を有する抵抗とから成ることを特徴とする 請求項1に記載の過電流検知回路。

【請求項4】 該基準電圧発生回路の構成が電源電圧 と、異なる温特を有する二つの抵抗とから成ることを特 徴とする請求項しに記載の過電流検知回路。

【発明の詳細な説明】

[0001]

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明は、従来の負荷に流れ る電流を検出する方式にあって、電流検出用ミラーMO SFETを有するパワーMOSFETを用いた過電流検 知回路の内、特に温特による過電流検知レベルのバラツ キを極めて小さくした過電流検知回路に関する。

[0002]

【従来の技術】まず、電流検出用ミラーMOSFETを 有するパワーMOSFETを用いた従来の過電流検知回 路としては図6に示すようなものがある。

【0003】図6において、101は負荷、102は負 40 荷を駆動するメインMOSFET、103はメインMO SFET102にミラー接続されるミラーMOSFE T、104はミラーMOSFETのソース端子に接続さ れる電流検出用抵抗、105はメイン・ミラーMOSF ET102.103のゲート制御回路、106は基準電 圧発生回路、107はミラーMOSFET103のソー ス電位と基準電圧発生回路106の出力とを入力とする 比較器とから構成される。

【0004】本方式では、ゲートON時に電流検出用抵

側とミラーMOSFET側のオン抵抗比により負荷電流 がある決まった割合で流れることにより生じる電圧と、 設定された基準電圧とをコンパレータで比較し、結果を 出力するととで、電流を検出するものである。 [0005]

【発明が解決しようとする課題】しかしながら、とのよ うな従来の通電流検知回路にあっては、上述のように、 メインMOSFETおよびミラーMOSFETに流れる 電流の割合が、メインMOSFETのオン抵抗(Ron 10 3) とミラーMOSFETのオン抵抗 (Ron4) +電 流検出用抵抗値(R s 2)の逆数比で決まってしまう。 【0006】ととでMOSFETのオン抵抗(Ron 3、Ron4)の温度係数(Q/℃)をa、電流検出用 抵抗Rs2の温度係数をbとすると、二つの関係から過 電流検知レベルのばらつきは以下の5 通りに場合分けす ることができる。

【0007】以下に、その各々の場合について説明する が、ととで電流検出抵抗Rs2とミラー電流14の積で 決まる電流検出電圧をセンス電圧V s 2と呼ぶことにす ると、V s 2の温特を考える場合には、上記から抵抗値 Rs2単体の温特以外にミラー電流 I4の温特も併せて 考慮する必要がある。

【0008】(1) a>b>0の場合

パワーMOSFETのオン抵抗の温度係数に比べて、電 流検出用抵抗の温度係数の方が小さいため、温度が上昇 するとミラーMOSFETの抵抗比が小さくなり、電流 検出用抵抗のR s 2 に流れる電流(以下、ミラー電流と 略)が増加する。また、電流検出用抵抗の温度係数も正 であるため、センス電圧V s 2 は強い正の温特を示すこ 30 とになる。

【0009】(2) a = bの場合

パワーMOSFETのオン抵抗の温度係数と電流検出用 抵抗の温度係数が等しいため、温度が変化してもメイン MOSFETとミラーMOSFETに流れる電流比に変 化がなくなるため、センス電圧Vs2は温特を持たず、 したがって同一電流の場合は温度によらず一定値とな

【0010】→ (理想状態)

(3) b>a>0、b>0>aの場合

電流検出用抵抗のオン抵抗の温度係数に比べて、パワー MOSFETの温度係数の方が小さいため、温度の上昇 とともにミラー電流は減少するが、電流検出用抵抗の温 度係数は正であるため、センス電圧V s 2 の温特は、 a. b. Ron3. Ron4. Rs2の値により変動す

【0011】→(過電流検知の温特は正・負・ゼロ)ど の場合も有り得る。)

(4) a>0>bの場合

パワーMOSFETのオン抵抗の温度係数に比べて、電 抗側(ミラーMOSFET側)に、メインMOSFET 50 流検出用抵抗の温度係数の方が小さいため、温度の上昇 3

とともにミラー電流が増加する。しかしながら、電流検 出用抵抗の温度係数は負であるため、センス電圧Vs2 の温特は、a,b,Ron3,Ron4,Rsの値によ り変動する。

【0012】→(通電流検知の温特は正・負・ゼロ どの場合も有り得る。)

(5) 0>a>bの場合

電流検出用抵抗のオン抵抗の温度係数に比べて、パワー MOSFETの温度係数の方が小さいため、温度の上昇 とともにミラー電流が減少する。また、電流検出用抵抗 10 の温度係数も負であることから、センス電圧Vs2は強い負の温特を示すことになる。

【0013】以上にまとめたように、MOSFETのオン抵抗(Ron3及びRon4)と電流検出用抵抗Rs 2の温度係数が異なると、温度の変化と共に

1/Ron3:1/(Ron4+Rs2)

の比率が変わることで電流検出用抵抗に流れる電流の割合が変化するが、その一方でコンパレータの基準電圧であるVref2を電源電圧Vccの抵抗分圧構成と仮定すると、抵抗分圧により生じる温特はないため、コンパ 20レータの基準電圧の温特(ほぼフラット)とセンス電圧Vs2の温特(傾き有)に大きな差が生じてしまうことで、過電流検知レベルが大きな温特ばらつきを持ってしまうという問題点があった。

【0014】 CCで、センス電圧 Vs2の温度特性の一例を図7に示す。図7は Vs2が正の温特を持つ場合について示したものであり、Vs2が温度上昇と共に増加する一方で、コンパレータの基準電圧の温特はフラットなため、温度が高くなると、より低い電流でも検知してしまう。即ち、過電流検知レベルが低くなってしまう様 30子がわかる。逆に、Vs2が負の温特を持つ場合は、同様の考察により過電流検知レベルは高くなる。

【0015】本発明は、このような従来の問題点に着目してなされたものであり、コンパレータの反転・非反転の両入力、即ちセンス電圧Vs2の温特と基準電圧Vref2の温特が等しくなるように定数設定することによって、上記問題点を解決した過電流検知回路を提供することを目的としている。

[0016]

【課題を解決するための手段】本発明は、上記の問題点 40 に鑑みなされたものであり、電流が流れる負荷と、この 負荷を駆動し、負荷とGND間に接続されたメインMO SFETと、メインMOSFETにミラー接続され負荷 電流の一部を流し、かつ、メインMOSFETと同等、*

11:12=(1/Ron1):(1/(Ron2+Rs1)) ... (A)

で決まる。ととで、

Ronl:メインMOSFETのオン抵抗 Ron2:ミラーMOSFETのオン抵抗 Rsl:電流検出用(センス)抵抗

である。

*もしくはそれ以下のトランジスタサイズであるミラーMOSFETと、ミラーMOSFETのソース端子とGND間に接続され、負荷電流の一部を流す抵抗と、メインMOSFETもよびミラーMOSFETの両方のゲート端子に接続されたゲート制御回路と、基準電圧発生回路と、基準電圧発生回路と、基準電圧発生回路といる。基準電圧発生回路といて、ミラーMOSFETのソース電位の温度係数と基準電圧発生回路の温度係数が等しい。また、基準電圧発生回路の視成がパンドギャップリファレンス回路であり、または定電流回路と所定の温特を有する抵抗とから成り、または電源電圧と、異なる温特を有する二つの抵抗とから構成される。

[0017]

【発明の実施の形態】以下、本発明の実施の形態を図面に基づいて詳細に説明する。図1は本発明の一実施の形態を示したもので、所定の温特を持つ基準電圧を出力する回路を有する過電流検知回路の構成図(ローサイドスイッチ適用例)である。まず本実施の形態の構成を説明する。図1において1は負荷、2はメインMOSFET、3はミラーMOSFET、4は電流検出用抵抗Rs1、5はメイン・ミラーMOSFETのゲート制御回路、6は温特を有する基準電圧発生回路、7は比較器からなる。

【0018】負荷1は一方を電源(VBAT)に、他方をミラーMOSFET3およびメインMOSFET2のドレイン端子に接続されている。メインMOSFET2およびミラーMOSFET3のゲート端子は共通で、ゲート制御回路5に接続され、制御回路出力によりトランジスタがON/OFFする。メインMOSFET2のソース端子はGNDに、ミラーMOSFET3のソース端子は電流検出用抵抗Rs1 4を介してGNDに接続される。また、比較器(コンパレータ)7はミラーMOSFET3のソース電位と温特を有する基準電圧発生回路6の出力とを入力としている。

【0019】次に本実施の形態の作用について説明する。

【0020】ゲート制御回路5が信号を出力しゲートが ONすると、メインMOSFET2およびミラーMOS FET3ともにONとなり、負荷1に電流が流れる。負荷1に流れる電流1は、メインMOSFET2(その電流を11)およびミラーMOSFET3(その電流を12)に分流し、その割合は下記式(A)

【0021】例えば、メインMOSFET2およびミラーMOSFET3が単位セルの集合体という形で形成されていれば、電流比はほぼそのセル比の逆数により決まる。ところで、ミラーMOSFET3に流れる電流1250 は、コンパレータ7の入力インピーダンスが非常に高い

ため、そのほとんどがセンス抵抗R s l に流れ込む。こ れによりセンス抵抗Rslとミラー電流12の積で表さ れることになり、最終的には負荷電流1に応じてミラー 電流12が流れることで、負荷電流1にほぼ比例してセ ンス電圧Vslが決まることになる。

【0022】過電流検知の判定は、このセンス電圧Vs 1と基準電圧Vref1とをコンパレータにて比較する ことで行う。例えば、Vsl<Vreflの場合は 通 常電流として判定

Vsl≧Vreflの場合は 過電流として検知し、通 10 VR=VBE(Q3)+VRb 常と反転の出力を行うというように設定すれば良い。

【0023】ととでセンス電圧Vslは、従来例の問題 点で述べたように一般に温特を持っているため、通常の一 基準電圧発生回路のままではセンス電圧V s 1の温特が 通電流検知レベルの温特ばらつきとして現われてしま

【0024】そこで本実施の形態では基準電圧発生回路 として、センス電圧Vslと同じ温特を有する基準電圧 発生回路、すなわち、温特によりセンス電圧V s 1が大 きくなれば、Vslの変化分と同じ割合だけ基準電圧V 20 lc(Qn):トランジスタQnに流れるコレクタ電流 reflも高く、センス電圧Vslが小さくなれば、V s 1の変化分と同じ割合だけ基準電圧Vreflも低く 調整できるような基準電圧発生回路を用いることによっ て、通電流検知レベルの温特ばらつきを補償している。*

*【0025】そこで、温特を有する基準電圧発生回路の 具体例を以下で説明する。 その第一の実施の形態を図2 に示す。まず構成を説明すると、図2において、Q4~ Q6·R5~R7は定電流回路部、R9はスタータ抵 抗、Q1~Q3·R8·Ra·Rbは基準電圧/温特調 整回路部、その他VR出力、分圧抵抗(RI・R2)、 Vrefl出力からなる。

【0026】次に作用を説明する。図2において、基準 電圧VRは、

すなわち、Q3のVBEとRbの電圧降下の和として表さ れる。

【0027】ここで、Rbの電圧降下VRDを求めると、 $(kT/q) \ln (Ic (Q1)/Is) = (kT/q)$ q) ln (lc (Q2)/nls) + lc (Q2) · R

但し、k:ボルツマン定数

丁: 絶対温度

q:電子の単位電荷

n:トランジスタ (Q1:Q2) のエミッタサイズ比 Is:コレクタ飽和電流

となる。これを変形すると、下記式(B)

lc (Q2) Ra

= (kT/q) ln (nlc (Q1)/lc (Q2)) ··· (B)

となる。 ととで、Q1とQ3のVEEは等しく、さらにR 2=R3とすると、

Ic(Q1) = Ic(Q2)

となるため、(B) 式より、

 $\times 1c (Q1) = 1c (Q2) = (kT/q) 1n (n)$ ∕Ra

となる。したがってVRbは

※30

VRb = (Rb/Ra) (kT/q) ln (n)

VR = VBE(Q3) + (Rb/Ra) (kT/q) ln(n)

本回路は、一般にバンドギャップリファレンス回路と呼★ ★ばれ、本来は

(Rb/Ra) (k/q) ln (n) = | VBE (Q3) の温特 | … (C)

とすることで、温特を持たない基準電圧(一般にほぼ 1. 25 V) を発生する回路であるが、本方式では

(C)式における(Rb/Ra)やnの値を適当な値に☆

(Rb/Ra) (k/q) ln (n)

を2mVとすれば出力電圧VRの温特はなくなり、

(D)式を2mVより大きくなるような抵抗比、n値に 40 設定すれば正の温特を、2mVより小さくなるような抵 抗比、n値を設定すれば負の温特を持つ回路が実現でき るととになる。

【0029】温特を持つ基準電圧発生回路を本方式で実 現した場合、出力電圧VRは(2)式により、その温特 は(C)式の左右項の差分によりそれぞれ連動して決ま ってしまうため、本回路を、Vslの絶対値および温特 の両方を一致させることが必要な過電流検知回路の基準 電圧として用いる場合、その出力を一度抵抗(R1・R 2) で分圧する必要が出てくる。

☆調整することで、所望の温特を実現している。

【0028】一般にトランジスタのVBEの温特はほぼ-2mV/C程度であるから、

... (D)

【0030】とこでさらに、温特を有する基準電圧発生 回路の第二の実施の形態を図3に示す。

【0031】まず構成を説明すると、図3において、B IAS端子は定電圧入力部、R11~R13、C1、Q 9~Q15はオペアンプ回路部、VIGN端子は電源電 圧入力部、R 1 0、R a、R b、Q 7、Q 8 は基準電圧 /温特調整回路部、その他VR出力、分圧抵抗(R1-R2)、Vrefl出力からなる。

【0032】次に作用を説明する。図3において、基準 電圧VRは、

VR = VBE(Q7) + VRb

50 すなわち、Q7のVBEとRbの電圧降下の和として表さ

れる。これは、オペアンプのイマジナリショート作用により、Q7のベース/コレクタ、Q8のベースとQ8のコレクタが同電位となるためである。その他の動作は第一の実施の形態と同様である。

【0033】以下に、基準電圧として温特を有する基準 電圧発生回路の第一および第二の実施の形態を用いた場合の具体的な出力電圧および温特の併せ込み方法について説明する。

【0034】まず事前にVsの温特を計算(または測定)し、下記の二点を評価する。

【0035】(1) ある温度におけるVs1の値(以下の説明では計算の都合上、Ta=27 CにおけるVs1*

$$\alpha = \gamma$$
 (VBE+300 κ)
 $\beta = \gamma$ (κ -d)

を満足するように、定数 γ ・ κ を決定すればよい。 【0036】上式を解くと、以下のようになる。 【0037】 κ = $(\beta V BE + \alpha d) / (\alpha - 300\beta)$ γ = $(\alpha - 300\beta) / (V BE + 300d)$ したがって最終的には、

 $\tau = R2/(R1+R2)$

よりァから抵抗値R1, R2を、

 $\kappa = (D)$ 式

より k から抵抗値Ra、Rb、エミッタサイズ比nを決めることになる。

【0038】温特を有する基準電圧発生回路の第三の実※

(E) 式における α を $\alpha = 1 \alpha \times R 140$

(F) 式におけるβを $\beta = I \alpha \times R140 \times (x/100)$

となるように設定すればよい。

【0.041】最後に温特を有する基準電圧発生回路の第四の実施の形態を図5に示す。

【 0 0 4 2 】まず構成を説明すると、図5 において、電源電圧V c c、抵抗R l 5、R l 6、V r e f l 出力からなる。

【0043】次に作用を説明する。図5において基準電圧Vref1は、電源電圧Vccを抵抗R15、R16 で分圧することにより発生する。Vref1の温特はR15、R16の絶対値および二つの異なる温特を利用して調整することになる。ここで、R15の抵抗値の温度係数をy(%/ $\mathbb C$)、Ta=27 $\mathbb C$ におけるR15の値をR150、R16の抵抗値の温度係数をz(%/ $\mathbb C$)、Ta=27 $\mathbb C$ におけるR16のとすると、(E) 式における α

α=R160/(R150+R160)・Vcc (F)式におけるβを

Vcc/(1+R15/R16)

= V c c / (1+ {R150 (1+y/100 (T-27) } /R160 (1+z/100 (T-27) }) にて決まる温特となるように設定すればよい。

[0044]

【発明の効果】以上説明してきたように、本発明によれ 50 1

*の値とした)

(2) V s 1 の温度特性図を (一次) 近似して得られる V s 1 の温度係数

ととで.

α …Ta=27℃におけるVs値

β …温特を一次近似して得られるV s の温度係数

γ ···基準電圧発生出力の抵抗分圧比 (<1)

κ … (D) 式に示した正の温度係数

VBE···トランジスタQ3のベース-エミッタ間電圧

10 d …トランジスタQ3のベースーエミッタ間電圧の温 度係数の絶対値

と仮定した時、

…(E) → (Z)式に対応

··· (F) → (D) 式に対応

※施の形態を図4に示す。

【0039】まず構成を説明すると、図4において、定電流回路、抵抗R14、Vref1出力からなる。

【0040】次に作用を説明する。図4において基準電 圧Vreflは、抵抗R14に定電流 [αが流れること により発生する。Vreflの温特はR14の温特を利用し、それに流す電流値を変えることで調整することに なる。ここで、R14の抵抗値の温度係数をx(%/℃)、Ta=27℃におけるR14の値をR140とすると、

ば、その構成をセンス電圧Vs1の温特をコンパレータの基準電圧Vref1の温特により相殺させる構成としるのをでは、従来例の問題点となっていた過電流検知レベルの温特によるばらつきを極めて小さくすることにより、過電流検知レベルの精度を向上させることができるという効果が得られる。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】本発明の一実施の形態を示す温特を持つ基準電 圧発生回路を有する過電流検知回路の電気結線図であ る。

【図2】本発明に用いられる温特を有する基準電圧発生 回路の第一の実施の形態を示す回路図である。

40 【図3】本発明に用いられる温特を有する基準電圧発生 回路の第二の実施の形態を示す回路図である。

【図4】本発明に用いられる温特を有する基準電圧発生 回路の第三の実施の形態を示す図である。

【図5】本発明に用いられる温特を有する基準電圧発生 回路の第四の実施の形態を示す図である。

【図6】従来例の過電流検出回路の電気結線図である。

【図7】従来例の問題点(過電流検知レベルの温度ばらつき)を説明するための説明図である。

【符号の説明】

1 負荷

【図4】

C

- 2 メインMOSFET
- 3 EF-MOSFET
- 4 電流検出用抵抗Rs1

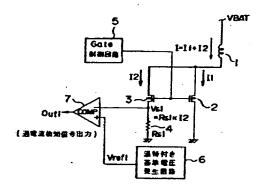
*5 ゲート制御回路

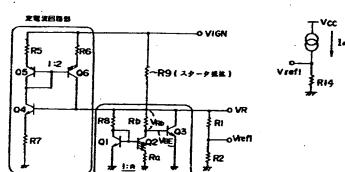
6 Vslと同じ温特を有する基準電圧発生回路

* 7 比較器 (コンパレータ)

【図2】

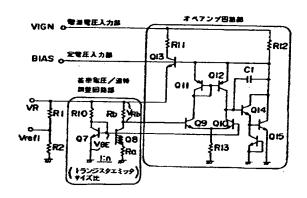
【図1】



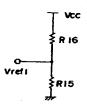


出力電圧/選特 調度回路部

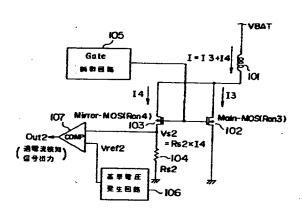
【図3】



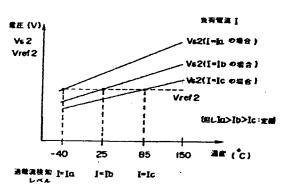
【図5】



【図6】



【図7】



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(54) Title:

OVERCURRENT DETECTING CIRCUIT

(57) Abstract

[Problem] To provide an overcurrent detecting device, improved in accuracy of an overcurrent detection level by setting constants so that both inputs of inversion and noninversion of a comparator, that is, the temperature characteristic of a sense voltage Vs2 and the temperature characteristic of a reference voltage Vref2 are equal to each other.

[Means for Resolution] This overcurrent detecting circuit includes: a load 1 through which a current flows, a resistor 4 which makes some of the load current flow through, a gate control circuit 5 connected to gate terminals of both of main MOSFET 2 and mirror MOSFET 3, a reference voltage generating circuit 6 and a comparator 7, to which the output of the reference voltage generating circuit and a source potential of the mirror MOSFET are input. In the circuit, the temperature coefficient of the source potential of the mirror MOSFET and the temperature coefficient of the source potential of the reference voltage generating circuit are equal to each other. The configuration

of the reference voltage generating circuit is a band gap reference circuit, or composed of a constant current circuit and a resistor having a designated temperature characteristic, or composed of a power supply voltage and two resistors having different temperature characteristics.

Claims:

- 1. An overcurrent detecting circuit, comprising: a load through which a current flows; a main MOSFET for driving the load, which is connected between the load and GND; a mirror MOSFET mirror-connected to the main MOSFET, through which some of load current flows, and which has a transistor size equal to or smaller than that of the main MOSFET; a resistor connected between a source terminal of the mirror MOSFET and GND, through which some of the load current flows; a gate control circuit connected to both of gate terminals of the main MOSFET and the mirror MOSFET; a reference voltage generating circuit; and a comparator to which the output of the reference voltage generating circuit and a source potential of the mirror MOSFET are input, wherein the temperature coefficient of the source potential of the mirror MOSFET and the temperature coefficient of the reference voltage generating circuit are equal to each other.
- 2. The overcurrent detecting circuit according to claim 1, wherein the configuration of the reference voltage generating

circuit is a band gap reference circuit.

- 3. The overcurrent detecting circuit according to claim 1, wherein the configuration of the reference voltage generating circuit is formed by a constant current circuit and a resistor having a designated temperature characteristic.
- 4. The overcurrent detecting circuit according to claim 1, wherein the configuration of the reference voltage generating circuit is formed by a power supply voltage and two resistors having different temperature characteristics.

Detailed Description of the Invention: [0001]

[Technical Field to which the Invention Belongs]

This invention relates to an overcurrent detecting circuit using a power MOSFET having a current detecting mirror MOSFET in a conventional system for detecting a current flowing through a load and particularly to the overcurrent detecting circuit remarkably reduced in variation of overcurrent detection level due to temperature characteristics.

[Prior Art]

[0003]

First, Fig. 6 shows an example of the conventional overcurrent detecting circuit using a power MOSFET having a current detecting mirror MOSFET.

In Fig. 6, the reference numeral 101 is a load, 102 is a main MOSFET for driving the load, 103 is a mirror MOSFET mirror-connected to the main MOSFET 102, the reference numeral 104 is a current detecting resistor connected to a source terminal of the mirror MOSFET, 105 is a gate control circuit of the main and mirror MOSFETs 102, 103, the reference numeral 106 is a reference voltage generating circuit, and 107 is a comparator taking the source potential of the mirror MOSFET 103 and the output of the reference voltage generating circuit 106 as input.

[0004]

In this system, when the gate is in the ON-state, a load current flows through the current detecting resistor side (mirror MOSFET side) at a certain determined ratio depending on the ON-state resistance ratio of the main MOSFET to the mirror MOSFET, the comparator compares the thus generated voltage with a preset reference voltage, and the comparison result is output to detect a current.

[0005]

[Problems that the Invention is to Solve]

In this type of conventional overcurrent detecting circuit, however, as described above, the ratio of currents flowing through the main MOSFET and the mirror MOSFET is determined by the reciprocal ratio of the ON-state resistance (Ron3) of the main MOSFET to the ON-state resistance (Ron4)

of the mirror MOSFET + Current Detecting Resistance Value (Rs2).

[0006]

When the temperature coefficient (Ω /°C) of the ON-state resistance (Ron3, Ro4) of the MOSFET is a, and the temperature coefficient of a current detecting resistance Rs2 is b, the variations of overcurrent detection level are classified into the following five kinds of cases depending on the relationship between the two temperature coefficients.

[0007]

The respective cases will now be described. In this case, when the current detecting voltage determined by the product of the current detecting resistance Rs2 by the mirror current I4 is called sense voltage Vs2, in the case of considering the temperature characteristic of the Vs2, as described above, it is necessary to consider the temperature characteristic of the mirror current I4 in addition to the temperature characteristic of the resistance value Rs2 simplex.

[8000]

a > b > 0

Since the temperature coefficient of the current detecting resistance is smaller than that of the ON-state resistor of the power MOSFET, when the temperature rises, the resistance ratio of the mirror MOSFET becomes smaller, so that the current flowing through the current detecting resistor Rs2

(hereinafter referred to as the mirror current) increases. Further, since the temperature coefficient of the current detecting resistance is also positive, the sense voltage vs2 shows a strong positive temperature characteristic.

[0009]

(2) a = b

Since the temperature coefficient of the ON-state resistor of the power MOSFET and the temperature coefficient of the current detecting resistor are equal to each other, even if the temperature changes, the ratio of currents flowing through the main MOSFET and the mirror MOSFET makes no change. Therefore, the sense voltage Vs2 has no temperature characteristic, so that in the case of the same current, a fixed value is obtained regardless of the temperature.

→ (ideal state)

 $b \rightarrow a \rightarrow 0$, $b \rightarrow 0 \rightarrow a$

Since the temperature coefficient of the power MOSFERT is smaller than that of the ON-state resistor of the current detecting resistor, the mirror current decreases as the temperature rises. The temperature coefficient of the current detecting resistor is, however, positive, so that the temperature characteristic of the sense voltage Vs2 varies with the values of a, b, Ron3, Ron4 and Rs2.

[0011]

ightarrow(it is possible that the temperature characteristic of the overcurrent detection is positive, negative and zero.)

a > 0 > b

Since the temperature coefficient of the current detecting resistance is smaller than that of the ON-state resistor of the power MOSFET, the mirror current increases as the temperature rises. The temperature coefficient of the current detecting resistor is, however, negative, so that the temperature characteristic of the sense voltage Vs2 varies with the values of a, b, Ron3, Ron4 and Rs.

ightarrow (it is possible that the temperature characteristic of overcurrent detection is positive, negative and zero.)

 $0 \rightarrow a \rightarrow b$

Since the temperature coefficient of the power MOSFET is smaller than that of the ON-state resistor of the current detecting resistor, the mirror current decreases as the temperature rises. Further, since the temperature coefficient of the current detecting resistor is also negative, the sense voltage Vs2 shows a strong negative temperature characteristic.

[0013]

As summarized in the above, when the ON-state resistors (Ron3 and Ron4) of the MOSFET and the current detecting resistor Rs2 are different in temperature coefficient, with the

temperature change, the ratio of

1/Ron3 : 1/(Ron4 + Rs2)

changes so that the percentage of the current flowing through the current detecting resistor changes. On the other hand, supposing that Vref2, which is the reference voltage of a comparator, is a resistance type potential dividing constitution of power supply voltage Vcc, no temperature characteristic is not caused by resistance type potential dividing, so that a large difference is generated between the temperature characteristic (substantially flat) of the reference voltage of the comparator and the temperature characteristic (inclined) of the sense voltage Vs2, resulting in the problem that the overcurrent detection level has a large variation in temperature characteristic.

[0014]

Fig. 7 shows an example of temperature characteristic of the sense voltage Vs2. Fig. 7 shows the case where the Vs2 has positive temperature characteristic, in which the Vs2 increases as the temperature rises, and on the other hand, the temperature characteristic of the reference voltage of the comparator becomes flat, so that when the temperature is high, even a lower current is detected. That is, the condition where the overcurrent detection level becomes low is found. On the contrary, in the case where the Vs2 has negative temperature characteristic, it is found through the same consideration that

the overcurrent level becomes high.
[0015]

The invention has been made with attention to the above problems of the prior art and it is an object of the invention to provide an overcurrent detection circuit which has solved the above problems by setting constants so that both inputs of inversion and noninversion of a comparator, that is, the temperature characteristic of a sense voltage Vs2 and the temperature characteristic of a reference voltage Vref2 are equal to each other.

[0016]

[Means for Solving the Problems]

The invention has been made in the light of the above problems to provide an overcurrent detection circuit including: a load through which a current flows; a main MOSFET for driving the load, which is connected between the load and GND; a mirror MOSFET mirror-connected to the main MOSFET, through which some of load current flows, and which has a transistor size equal to or smaller than that of the main MOSFET; a resistor connected between a source terminal of the mirror MOSFET and GND, through which some of the load current flows; a gate control circuit connected to both of gate terminals of the main MOSFET and the mirror MOSFET; a reference voltage generating circuit; and a comparator to which the output of the reference voltage generating circuit and a source

potential of the mirror MOSFET are input, in which the temperature coefficient of the source potential of the mirror MOSFET and the temperature coefficient of the reference voltage generating circuit are equal to each other. Further, the configuration of the reference voltage generating circuit is a band gap reference circuit, or formed by a constant current circuit and a resistor having a designated temperature characteristic, or formed by a power supply voltage and two resistors having different temperature characteristics.

[Mode for Carrying Out the Invention]

The mode for carrying out the invention will now be described in detail according to the attached drawings. Fig. 1, which shows one embodiment of the invention, is a block diagram (an example of low side switch application) of an overcurrent detecting circuit having a circuit for outputting reference voltage having a designated temperature characteristic. The configuration of the present embodiment will be first described. In Fig. 1, the reference numeral 1 is a load, 2 is a main MOSFET, 3 is a mirror MOSFET, 4 is a current detecting resistor Rs1, the reference numeral 5 is a gate control circuit of main-mirror MOSFETs, 6 is a reference voltage generating circuit having a temperature characteristic, and the reference numeral 7 is a comparator. [0018]

One side of the load 1 is connected to a power supply (VBAT), and the other side thereof is connected to drain terminals of the mirror MOSFET 3 and the main MOSFET 2. The main MOSFET 2 and the mirror MOSFET 3 have a common gate terminal, which is connected to a gate control circuit 5, thereby turning on and off the transistors according to the output of the control circuit. The source terminal of the main MOSFET2 is connected to GND, and the source terminal of the mirror MOSFET 3 is connected through the current detecting resistor Rs1 4 to GND. The comparator 7 takes the source potential of the mirror MOSFET 3 and the output of the reference voltage generating circuit 6 having a temperature characteristic as input.

[0019]

The operation of the present embodiment will now be described.

[0020]

when the gate control circuit 5 outputs a signal to turn on the gate, both of the main MOSFET2 and the mirror MOSFET 3 are turned on, so that a current flows through the load 1. The current I flowing through the load 1 is shunt into the main MOSFET 2 (the current is I1) and the mirror MOSFET 3 (the current is I2), and the ratio is determined by the following formula (A).

I1 : I2 = (1/Ron1) : (1/Ron2 + Rs 1))... (A)

where

Ron1 : ON-state resistance of main MOSFET

Ron2 : On-state resistance of mirror MOSFET

Rs1 : current detecting (sense) resistance

[0021]

When the main MOSFET 2 and the mirror MOSFET 3 are formed as an aggregate of unit cells, the current ratio is determined substantially by the reciprocal of the cell ratio. The I2 current flowing through the mirror MOSFET 3 has very high input impedance of the comparator 7, so most of the current flows into the sense resistor Rs1. Thus, it is expressed by the product of the sense resistor Rs1 by the mirror current I2, and finally the mirror current I2 flows depending on the load current I, so that the sense voltage Vs1 is determined substantially in proportion to the load current I.

The overcurrent detection is determined by comparing the sense voltage Vs1 with the reference voltage Vref1 in the comparator. For example, in the case of Vs1 < Vref1, it is determined to be a normal current, and in the case of Vs1 \ge Vref1, it is detected to be an overcurrent, and it will be sufficient to set so that the output reverse to the normal is performed.

[0023]

In this case, the sense voltage Vs1 generally has a

temperature characteristic, as described in the problems of the prior art, so with the ordinary reference voltage generating circuit as it is, the temperature characteristic of the sense voltage Vs1 is shown as temperature characteristic variation in the overcurrent detection level.

[0024]

So, according to the present embodiment, as the reference voltage generating circuit, used is a reference voltage generating circuit having the same temperature characteristic as the sense voltage Vs1, that is, the reference voltage generating circuit in which when the sense voltage Vs1 is increased according to the temperature characteristic, the reference voltage Vref1 is also adjusted to be higher at the same ratio as the change of Vs1, and when the sense voltage Vs1 is decreased, the reference voltage Vref1 is adjusted to be lower at the same ratio as the change of Vs1, thereby compensating for the temperature characteristic variation in overcurrent detection level.

[0025]

A concrete example of a reference voltage generating circuit having a temperature characteristic will be described in the following. A first mode for carrying out the invention is shown in Fig. 2. First the configuration will be described. In Fig. 2, the circuit is composed of Q4 to Q6 and R5 to R7 which are constant current circuit parts, R9 which is a starter

resistor, Q1 to Q3, R8, Ra, and Rb which are reference voltage/temperature characteristic adjusting circuit parts, the other VR output, partial pressure resistors R1, R2, and Vref1 output.

[0026]

The operation will now be described. In Fig. 2, the reference voltage VR is

VR = VBE (Q3) + VRb.

That is, it is expressed as the sum of VBE of Q3 and a voltage drop of Rb.

[0027]

T: absolute temperature,

q: unit charge of electron,

Ic (Qn): collector current flowing through the transistor Qn, n: emitter size ratio of transistors (Q1:Q2), and

Is: collector saturation current. When this is transformed, the following formula (B) is obtained.

Ic(Q2)Ra

= (kT/q) 1n (nIc (Q1)/Ic (Q2)...(B) wherein Q1 and Q3 are equal in VBE, and further when R2=R3, Ic (Q1) = Ic (Q2), so from the formula (B), they are formulated

as follows:

Ic (Q1) = Ic (Q2) = (kT/q) 1n (n)/Ra. Accordingly, VRb is

VRb = (Rb/Ra) (kT/q) 1n (n)

VR = VBE (Q3) + (Rb/Ra) (kT/q) ln(n) ... (Z)

This circuit is generally called a band gap reference circuit, and originally, it is a circuit for generating reference voltage (generally about 1.25V) having no temperature characteristic by setting as follows:

(Rb/Ra) (k/q) 1n (n) = :temperature characteristic VBE(Q3); ...(C)

In this system, (Rb/Ra) and the value of n in the formula (C) are adjusted to suitable values to realize a desired temperature characteristic.

[0028]

Generally since the temperature characteristic of VBE of the transistor is about $-2\,m\,V/^{\circ}C$, when

(Rb/Ra) (k/q) 1n (n) ... (D)

is 2mV, the temperature characteristic of the output voltage VR is eliminated. When a resistance ratio and the value of n are set larger than 2mV in the formula (D), a circuit having a positive temperature characteristic can be realized, and when a resistance ratio and the value of n are set smaller than 2mV, a circuit having a negative temperature characteristic can be realized.

[0029]

In the case where a reference voltage generating circuit having a temperature characteristic is realized by this system, the output voltage VR is determined according to the formula (2) and its temperature characteristic is determined by interlocking according to a difference between the right and left terms of the formula (C). Consequently, in the case of using this circuit as the reference voltage of the overcurrent detecting circuit required to make both of the absolute value of Vsl and the temperature characteristic conformable to each other, it is necessary to once divide the output by the resistors R1, R2.

[0030]

Further, a second embodiment of a reference voltage generating circuit having a temperature characteristic is shown in Fig. 3.

[0031]

First the configuration will be described. Referring to Fig. 3, the circuit is composed of BIAS terminal, which is a constant voltage input part, R11 to R13, C1 and Q9 to Q15, which are operational amplifier circuit parts, VIGN terminal, which is a power supply voltage input part, R10, Ra, Rb, Q7 and Q8, which are reference voltage/ temperature characteristic adjusting circuit parts, the other VR output, partial potential resistors (R1, R2), and Vref1 output.

[0032]

The operation will now be described. In Fig. 3, the reference voltage VR is

VR = VBE(Q7) + VRb.

That is, it is expressed as the sum of VBE of Q7 and the voltage drop of Rb. The reason for this is that the base/collector of Q7 and the base of Q8 and the collector of Q8 are at the same potential owing to the imaginary short operation of the operational amplifier. The other operations are similar to that in the first embodiment.

The following description deals with a concrete method of connecting the output voltage with the temperature characteristic in the case of using the first and second embodiments of reference voltage generating circuits having the temperature characteristic as the reference voltage.

[0034]

First the temperature characteristic of Vs is previously calculated (or measured) to evaluate the two following points. [0035]

- (1) The value of Vs1 at a certain temperature (in the following description, for the convenience of calculation, the value of Vs1 at Ta = 27°C is taken)
- (2) The temperature coefficient of Vs1 obtained by primary-approximating the temperature characteristic diagram

of Vs1

When it is supposed that $\alpha \dots$ Vs value at Ta = 27°C,

eta... a temperature coefficient of Vs obtained by primary-approximating the temperature characteristic,

 $\gamma...$ a resistance dividing ratio of reference voltage generating output(<1),

 $\kappa \dots$ a positive temperature coefficient shown in the formula (D),

VBE ... base-emitter voltage of a transistor Q3, and

d ... the absolute value of the temperature coefficient of the base-emitter voltage of the transistor Q3,

it will be sufficient to determine the constants γ and κ to satisfy the followings:

 $\alpha = \gamma \text{ (VBE + 300 K)} \dots \text{ (E)} \rightarrow \text{corresponding to the formula (Z)}$

 β = γ (κ - d) ... (F) \rightarrow corresponding to the formula (D) [0036]

When the above equation is solved, the result is as follows.

[0037]

 $\kappa = (\beta VBE + \alpha d) / (\alpha - 300\beta)$

 $\gamma = (\alpha - 300\beta) / (VBE + 300d)$

Accordingly, finally

from the formula

 γ = R2/(R1 + R2),

the resistance values R1, R2 are determined by γ ,

and

from κ = (D) formula,

the resistance values Ra, Rb and the emitter size ratio n are determined by κ_{\cdot}

[0038]

Fig. 4 shows a third embodiment of a reference voltage generating circuit having a temperature characteristic. [0039]

First the configuration will now be described. In Fig. 4, the circuit is composed of a constant current circuit, a resistor R14 and Vrefl output.

The operation will now be described. In Fig. 4, when a constant current I α flows through the resistor R14, the reference voltage Vref1 is generated. The temperature characteristic of the Vref uses the temperature characteristic of R14, and the value of a current let flow through the R14 is varied to make adjustment. In this case, when the temperature coefficient of the resistance value of the R14 is x (%/°C), and the value of the R14 at Ta = 27°C is taken as R140, it will be sufficient to set as follows.

 α in the formula (E) is α = I α x R140

 β in the formula (F) is $\beta{=}\,1\alpha$ x R140 x (x/100). [0041]

Lastly a fourth embodiment of a reference voltage

generating circuit having a temperature characteristic is shown in Fig. 5.

[0042]

First the configuration will be described. In Fig. 5, the circuit is composed of a power supply voltage Vcc, resistors R15, R16 and Vref1 output.

[0043]

The operation will now be described. In Fig. 5, the reference voltage Vrefl is generated by dividing the power supply voltage Vcc by the resistors R15, R16. The temperature characteristic of the Vref1 is adjusted by using the absolute values of the R15 and R 16, and two different temperature characteristics. In this case, when the temperature coefficient of the resistance value of the R15 is $y^{-}(%/^{\circ}C)$, the value of the R15 at Ta = 27° C is R150, the temperature coefficient of the resistance value of the R16 is z (%/°C), the value of the R16 at Ta = 27°C is R160, it will be sufficient to set α in the formula (E) to have a temperature characteristic determined by α = R160/(R150 + R160)? Vcc, and it will be sufficient to set β in the formula (F) to have a temperature characteristic determined by Vcc/(1 + R15/R16) = Vcc/(1 + $\{R150 (1 + y/100 (T - 27))\}/R160 (1 + Z/100 (T-27))\}$ [0044]

[Advantage of the Invention]

According to the invention, as described above, the

temperature characteristic of the sense voltage Vs1 is cancelled by the temperature characteristic of the reference voltage Vref1 of the comparator, whereby the variation in overcurrent detection level due to a temperature characteristic, which has been the problem of the prior art, can be remarkably reduced so as to improve the accuracy of overcurrent detection level.

Brief Description of the Drawings:

Fig. 1 is an electric connecting diagram of an overcurrent detecting circuit having a reference voltage generating circuit having a temperature characteristic, showing one embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 2 is a circuit diagram showing a first embodiment of a reference voltage generating circuit having a temperature characteristic used in the invention;

Fig. 3 is a circuit diagram showing a second embodiment of a reference voltage generating circuit having a temperature characteristic used in the invention;

Fig. 4 is a circuit diagram showing a third embodiment of a reference voltage generating circuit having a temperature characteristic used in the invention;

Fig. 5 is a circuit diagram showing a fourth embodiment of a reference voltage generating circuit having a temperature characteristic used in the invention;

Fig. 6 is an electric connecting diagram of an overcurrent detecting circuit according to the prior art; and

Fig. 7 is a diagram for explaining the problems (temperature variation in overcurrent detection level) of the prior art.

[Description of the Reference Numerals and Signs]

1: load 2: main MOSFET 3: mirror MOSFET 4: current detecting resistor Rs1 5: gate control circuit 6: reference voltage generating circuit having the same temperature characteristic as Vs1 7: comparator

FIGURE 1:

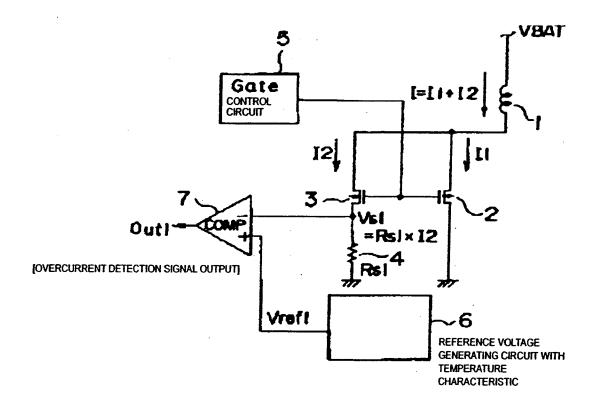
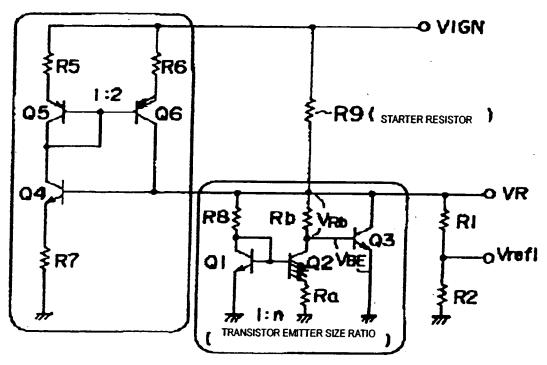


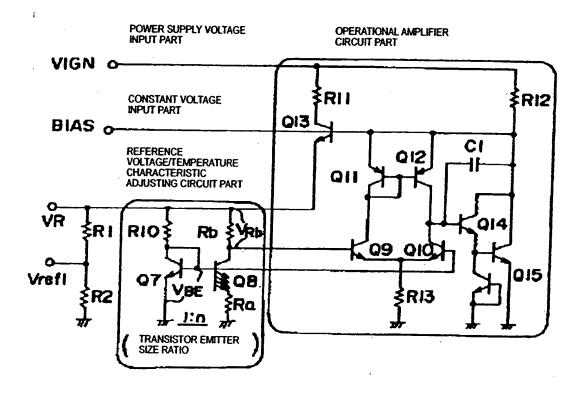
FIGURE 2:

CONSTANT CURRENT CIRCUIT PART



OUTPUT VOLTAGE/TEMPERATURE CHARACTERISTIC ADJUSTING CIRCUIT PART

FIGURE 3:



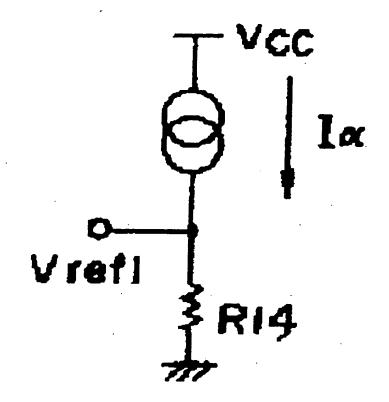


FIGURE 5:

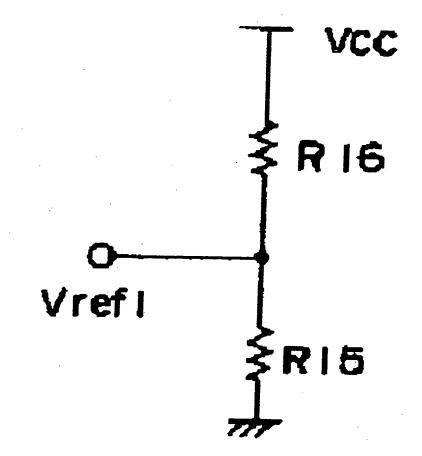


FIGURE 6:

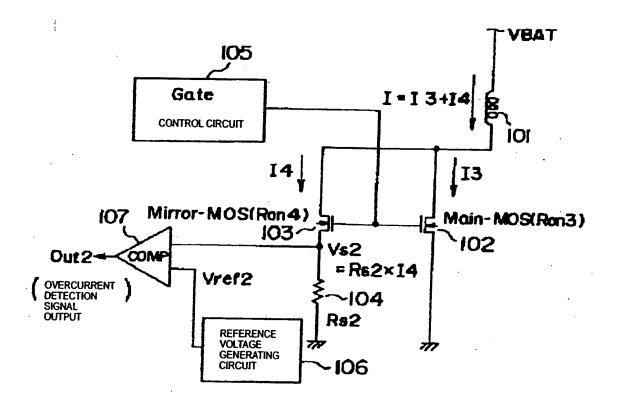


FIGURE 7:

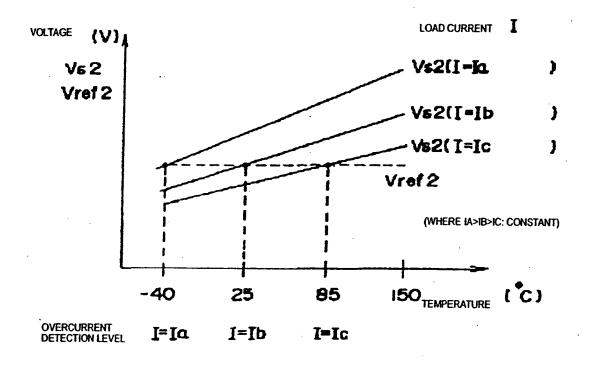


FIGURE 1:

5: GATE CONTROL CIRCUIT 6: REFERENCE VOLTAGE GENERATING CIRCUIT WITH TEMPERATURE CHARACTERISTIC [OVERCURRENT DETECTION SIGNAL OUTPUT]

FIGURE 2:

R9: STARTER RESISTOR 21: CONSTANT CURRENT CIRCUIT PART 22: [TRANSISTOR EMITTER SIZE RATIO] 23: OUTPUT VOLTAGE/TEMPERATURE CHARACTERISTIC ADJUSTING CIRCUIT PART

FIGURE 3:

31: POWER SUPPLY VOLTAGE INPUT PART 32: OPERATIONAL AMPLIFIER CIRCUIT PART 33: CONSTANT VOLTAGE INPUT PART 34: REFERENCE VOLTAGE/TEMPERATURE CHARACTERISTIC ADJUSTING CIRCUIT PART 35: [TRANSISTOR EMITTER SIZE RATIO]

FIGURE 6:

105: GATE CONTROL CIRCUIT 106: REFERENCE VOLTAGE GENERATING CIRCUIT (OVERCURRENT DETECTION SIGNAL OUTPUT)

FIGURE 7:

71: LOAD CURRENT I 72: VOLTAGE V 73: OVERCURRENT DETECTION LEVEL 74: TEMPERATURE °C 75: (WHERE IA>IB>IC: CONSTANT)

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